

THE BISHOPS IN SESSION

Eminent Prelates of the Race's Greatest Ecclesiastical Organization Assemble to Discuss Ways and Means for the Extension of Church Work.

The citizens of Washington enjoyed a rare treat last week and the early part of the present week. We had with us the Bishops and Executive Officers of the great African Methodist Episcopal Church, the strongest race organization in the world. The meeting is what is known as the Quadrennial Session of the Bishops' Council. This session is attended by all of the Bishops and by the different officers and heads of all of the different departments of the work of this great Church. The meetings are held once in four years, usually a few months before the meeting of the Quadrennial Conference, which will be held this year in Columbus, Ohio. In politics this meeting would be known as a caucus, for here the Bishops and the leading officers of the Church meet to discuss all plans, ways and means, and outline a program for the work to be acted upon and executed at the Quadrennial Conference. All the work of this great African Methodist denomination has come from out of this Council. The heads of the different departments make recommendations and suggestions as to the improvements and changes in the work. Here it is decided how many new Bishops shall be elected; here it is decided how many new schools will be established; how many new missionaries are to be sent into the field; what increase of amount shall be given to supernumerated ministers and a thousand and one things along this line. Heads of the different departments are admitted, one at a time, into the Bishops' Council and make their recommendations. Not only these, but they leave a written report of their recommendations, so that they can be acted upon afterwards. For years it has been the custom that whatever is recommended by the Bishops Council is generally favorably acted upon in the Conference; but any measure that is offered and recommended by an executive officer, if it is not accepted by the Bishops Council, may be taken to the Conference and debated on the floor.

At the great Quadrennial Conference which is to held in Columbus, O., next May, Bishop Abram Grant will deliver an address of the Bishops' Council to that great body and Bishop B. F. Lee will preach the Quadrennial sermon. Two Bishops have died since the last session of the Quadrennial Conference, namely, Bishop J. C. Embury and Bishop J. H. Armstrong. Since the death of these two Bishops, Bishops Grant and Gaines have divided the work of the 7th Episcopal District, Bishop Grant taking South Carolina and Bishop Gaines taking Florida. In the tenth district, made vacant by the death of Bishop Armstrong, Bishop James H. Handy has had charge of the work in Louisiana, while Bishop Salter has looked after Texas, the great Lone Star State. In a conversation with Dr. M. M. Moore, the Financial Secretary of the A. M. E. Church, whose headquarters are in this city, he spoke in the most enthusiastic terms of the great work the Church is doing, and the great increase in the population of the Church as well as in number of places of worship, the increase in the amount of property owned and the very, very great increase in the amount of dollar money. In fact



REV. M. M. MOORE, D. D.,
African Methodism's Most Successful Financial Secretary. His Elevation to The Bishopric Universally Conceded.

the increase of the dollar money in this Quadrennial Session over that of last Session is little less than \$70,000.

The Bishops, the executive officers of and leading men of the denomination from all parts of the country spent a pleasant time every moment of their stay here, and Sunday many pulpits rang with the eloquence and the pride and gift of African Methodism. The first day's session began last Wednesday, January 31st, at the Metropolitan A. M. E. church on M street. The opening session took place at 10 am., with devotional exercises, followed by an address by that grand old hero and champion, Bishop Henry M. Turner. In addition to Bishop Turner, who presided at the forenoon session, those present were Bishop W. J. Gaines, Bishop Benjamin W. Arnett, Bishop B. T. Tanner, Bishop Abraham Grant, Bishop Benjamin F. Lee, Bishop M. B. Salter, Bishop James A. Handy, and Bishop W. B. Derrick. After hymns and prayers by Bishops Tanner, Handy, and Salter, the bishops went into executive session.

Among the distinguished churchmen present during the opening services were Rev. T. W. Henderson, general business manager, Philadelphia; Rev. C. S. Smith, secretary Sunday school Union, Nashville; Rev. M. M. Moore, financial secretary, Washington; Dr. H. B. Parks, secretary to the bishops, New York; Prof. J. R. Hawkins, commissioner of education; Rev. C. T. Shaffer, committee of church extension; Dr. H. T. Johnson, editor Christian Recorder; Rev. C. L. Bradwell, Atlanta, Ga.; Rev. James Dean, North Carolina; Rev. J. W. Beckett, Baltimore; Rev. R. F. Hurley, Detroit; Rev. W. D. Chappelle, Columbia, S. C.; Rev. R. C. Ransom, Chicago; Rev. N. J. McCracken, Chicago; Prof. C. S. Smith, secretary historical committee; Rev. J. Albert Johnson, pastor Metropolitan church; Rev. John W. Henderson, New York, and Rev. John Hurst, Baltimore.

On account of the indisposition of Bishop Turner in the evening, Bishop

Arnett delivered the annual sermon for him. The council decided to accept an invitation to appear before the industrial commission during the week. The secretary was authorized to arrange a date.

The evening's session began at 8 pm. when a grand reception was given to the Bishops by the pastor, the members and friends of the Metropolitan A. M. E. church. Notwithstanding the inclement weather, there was a large attendance. Bishop W. J. Gaines presided, and after a hymn by the choir and prayer by Bishop Derrick he introduced Hon. John W. Ross, Commissioner of the District of Columbia, who delivered an address of welcome. Mr. Ross, who with others prominent in the affairs of the church and nation, occupied seats on the platform, arose, and after a few introductory remarks, branched into his topic. He stated that there were 89,000 Negroes resident here, who are accommodated by 104 churches and 39 schools. The school property, he said, is valued at \$1,100,000. He outlined the condition of the Negro race here, and said there are thousands who reside in the alleys of the District who really need the assistance of the council. The church alone, he said, can remedy this evil, and Mr. Ross went on to detail the great good which has been done by the kindergartens and the independent bands of workers. He told of the number of Negroes employed under the District government, and said that there was no doubt the race had a great future before it.

Rev. F. J. Grimke, one of the most scholarly of our pastors, was next introduced to deliver an address on the part of the clergymen. He praised the noble work of the church, and gave a brief sketch of its history and the great work it has done. He urged the continuance of the present system, and stated that a study should be made of the work of this church. He made an able plea that Rev. J. Albert Johnson be chosen to fill one of the vacant

bishoprics. Mr. J. M. Simms in fervent and well-chosen language, on the behalf of the laity of the city, traced the history of the African Methodist Episcopal Church from its establishment in 1840 up to today. He talked for some time, setting forth the good work of the church and the need for such an educator, especially among the Negro race.

Bishop B. T. Tanner made the response on behalf of the bishops. He made quite an eloquent reply and told of the good effects of Christianity. He told of the foundation of the African Methodist Episcopal Church among the Negroes, and of the necessity of the institution at the time. The people, he said, were dissatisfied, but they had come to appreciate the wisdom of their action with the growth of the church.

Rev T. W. Henderson, of Philadelphia also made an address, in which he described the work of the church. He spoke in glowing terms of the city of Washington as a convention place, and congratulated the council upon its choice. Prof. H. T. Kealing made response on behalf of the council, which was listened to attentively. Other speeches were delivered during the evening, which were in hearty accord with the sentiment of the gathering. The music was a special feature of the meeting, and the choir, under Prof. Layton, was congratulated on its work.

The second day's session began Thursday, February 1st at 10 am. After devotional exercises, the reports of the general officers were received. The Bishop's Council then went into private session and adjourned late in the afternoon. The evening session of the second day began at 8 pm. This was a gala night, for the Bishops were the honored guests of the Metropolitan Church at the 25th anniversary of itinerant services of Rev. J. Albert Johnson, the energetic and popular pastor. A most excellent and well selected program was rendered, a full account of which was given in our last issue.

The third day's session began Friday at 10 am. After devotional exercises, additional reports were handed in by the general officers and the council held private sessions, admitting only such general officers as had reports and explanations to make. M. M. Moore, the financial secretary, read his report Bishop Turner presided. In the afternoon a session was held at the financial department, 1535 Fourteenth street. C. T. Shaffer of the church extension, presented his report, while Rev. C. S. Smith also made report for the Sunday school department.

The evening's session of the third day began at 8 pm. It was the anniversary meeting, with the scholarly Bishop B. F. Lee presiding. This was one of the most interesting of all of the sessions. "Education," and "Missions" were the subjects. Bishop W. B. Derrick of the diocese of Arkansas and Tennessee, who was formerly secretary of mission work, was the principal speaker and he took for his topic, "The Gospel in all Lands," and told in his usual eloquent and happy vein of the progress of the race in all countries where the gospel is preached. He told of the condition of the race in the South, as well as in Africa and Haiti and other islands. In Africa, he said, there are 216 missionaries, and he went on to describe their work throughout that country. He also spoke of the